



11-11-16

Acton Memorial Library
486 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720

Dear Sir or Madam:

I was surprised to find the book Bitterblue by Kristin Cashore downstairs in the children/teen department. The story seems more appropriate to be shelved in the Young Adult section.

The jacket of Bitterblue is very attractive and appealing. The summary on your web-site follows:

"The long-awaited companion to New York Times bestsellers Graceling and Fire. Eight years after Graceling, Bitterblue is now queen of Monsea. But the influence of her father, a violent psychopath with mind-altering abilities, lives on. Her advisors, who have run things since Leck died, believe in a forward-thinking plan: Pardon all who committed terrible acts under Leck's reign, and forget anything bad ever happened. But when Bitterblue begins sneaking outside the castle--disguised and alone--to walk the streets of her own city, she starts realizing that the kingdom has been under the 35-year spell of a madman, and the only way to move forward is to revisit the past. Two thieves, who only steal what has already been stolen, change her life forever. They hold a key to the truth of Leck's reign. And one of them, with an extreme skill called a Grace that he hasn't yet identified, holds a key to her heart."

The problem is that the summary and jacket cover do not let the potential reader or their parent know what types of thing are written about in the story. The content has some more mature concepts and disturbing events.

- 1.) The former king had the ability to influence other people's thoughts and caused his advisors to rape and to cut little girls. Further, his journal shares his pleasure at the sounds of torture and the bleeding of the children. The reader also learns that the king watched these deviant events.
- 2.) The former king raped his wife and another woman who later bore his illegitimate child.
- 3.) The former king not only tortured people but also tortured animals.
- 4.) Several of the advisors who are now upset that others will learn of the past commit suicide.
- 5.) One of the advisors prior to killing himself engages in Cutting. The medical doctor who the young girl asks about Cutting is very clinical and does not let the reader learn of the seriousness of Cutting or how to intervene or that intervention should take place.
- 6.) The two adult women who are close to the young girl give her an herbal equivalent of the morning after pill when they think that she might have sex with the young man she recently met. I was brought up

conservatively and my faith teaches that life begins at conception so the morning after pill is a moral topic. Some parents may also not want young readers to have decisions about sex and using the morning after pills to be so casually done without any apparent consideration or moral debates.

7.) Not all adults in our country agree about gay marriage. Again this topic is just thrown in the story.

I spoke with the librarian after reading Bitterblue. She indicated that the story was disturbing. **Yes, the rape and cutting of children was disturbing.** I really do not think that it should be shelved in the children's department. I most strongly suggest that you reconsider the book's placement on the shelves; even if some official library guide says this book belongs within a set age bracket, I truly hope that your library will use good judgment when shelving selections. As an adult I was disturbed by the topics in this book and would not have been mature enough to be exposed to them when reading them as a child/teen. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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